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Sustainable development: implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Yemen:* draft resolution

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 58/211 of 23 December 2003, 61/202 of 20 December 2006, 62/193 of 19 December 2007, 63/218 of 19 December 2008 and 64/202 of 21 December 2009 and other resolutions relating to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1]

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome[2] and the final outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals,[3]

Recalling further the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification 2010-2020,[4]

Recalling the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building of developing countries,[5]

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[2] See resolution 60/1.

[3] Resolution 65/1.

[4] Resolution 64/201.

[5] UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex.

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Reasserting its commitment to combating and reversing desertification and land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, consistent with articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Convention, and to mitigating the effects of drought, eradicating extreme poverty, promoting sustainable development and food security and improving the livelihoods of vulnerable people affected by drought and/or desertification, taking into account the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018),[6] supporting the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, including from regional cooperation, and the mobilization of adequate and predictable financial resources,

Reaffirming the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[7] in which the Convention is recognized as one of the tools for poverty eradication, and reiterating its resolve to eradicate extreme poverty,

Acknowledging that desertification, land degradation and drought are challenges of a global dimension in that they affect all regions of the world,

Concerned by the increasing frequency and severity of dust/sandstorms affecting arid and semi-arid regions and their negative impact on the environment and the economy,

Concerned also by the negative impacts that desertification, land degradation, loss of biodiversity and climate change have on each other, recognizing the potential benefits of complementarities in addressing these problems at all levels in a mutually supportive manner, and recognizing also the interrelationship between climate change, loss of biodiversity and desertification and the need to intensify efforts to combat desertification and promote sustainable land management,

Concerned further that extreme desertification and land degradation processes affect a quarter of Latin America and the Caribbean region, as well as Asia, a situation which has not been perceived in all its magnitude, increasing the vulnerability of poor communities and compromising food security,

Noting the need for enhanced cooperation among the secretariats of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[8] and the Convention on Biological Diversity[9] ("the Rio Conventions"), while respecting their individual mandates,

Underlining the cross-sectoral nature of desertification, land degradation and drought mitigation, and in this regard inviting all relevant United Nations organizations to cooperate with the Convention secretariat in supporting an effective response to desertification and drought,

Concerned by the situation of one billion drylands inhabitants, who are among the poorest on the planet and are lagging behind in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular those relating to hunger and poverty,

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[6] A/C.2/62/7, annex.

[7] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[8] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[9] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.

Recognizing the need for investment in sustainable land management in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, and emphasizing the need for the full implementation of the ten-year strategic plan and framework,

Noting that the ten-year strategic plan and framework highlights the importance given to the development and implementation of scientifically based and sound methods for monitoring and assessing desertification and the efforts under way to promote scientific research and to strengthen the scientific base of the activities on desertification and drought under the Convention,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;[10]

2. *Invites* Member States to enhance support for the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1] including by mainstreaming its core issues into development strategies, to integrate desertification and land degradation into their plans and strategies for sustainable development and to integrate national action programmes related to drought and desertification into national development strategies;

3. *Urges* the United Nations system and Member States, in particular the donor community, to pay specific attention to the billion drylands inhabitants by investing more resources in drylands if Millennium Development Goal targets are to be met and an equal distribution of development to be achieved;

4. *Welcomes* the outcomes of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development[11] regarding desertification, land degradation and drought and emphasizes the need to implement the policy options pertaining to that session;

5. *Fully aware of* the need to cooperate at the global and regional levels, with a view to preventing and managing dust/sandstorms including by sharing related information, forecasting and early warning systems, and affirming that combating sand and dust storms demands financial support and the transfer of technology from developed countries to developing countries;

6. *Calls for* the active additional substantive engagement and support of all parties, including in terms of human and financial resources, in the process of strengthening the scientific base of the activities on desertification and drought under the Convention, particularly those required to measure the impact of the implementation of the Convention;

7. *Promotes* the strengthening of the advisory role of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the Committee on Science and Technology through their recommendations in order to monitor effectively the decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

8. *Calls for* the enhancement of the technical capabilities of national coordinating bodies and national focal points of the Convention, through the provision of an institutional and coordinated scientific back-up;

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[10] A/65/294.

[11] See E/2009/29.

9. *Decides* to convene a one day high-level meeting on the theme, "Addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication", to be held on Monday, 19 September 2011, prior to the general debate of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly;

10. *Convinced* that the high-level meeting will constitute a significant event that will raise the awareness of desertification, land degradation and drought at the highest level, reaffirm the fulfilment of all commitments to the Convention and its ten-year strategic plan and framework (2008-2018), ensuring a higher priority for desertification, land degradation and drought on the international agenda, in particular at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio plus 20):

(a) Decides that the meeting will be structured around an opening plenary meeting followed by one interactive panel in the morning, on the same theme as the high-level meeting, followed by an interactive panel in the afternoon and a closing plenary;

(b) Decides that the panels will be co-chaired by Heads of State or Government, with due regard to geographical balance, in consultation with regional groups;

(c) Decides that the meeting will be held at the highest possible political level, with the participation of Heads of State or Government, ministers, special representatives and other representatives, as appropriate;

(d) Decides that the preparations for the meeting will be undertaken under the aegis of the President of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly;

(e) Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a background paper for the high-level meeting, in consultation with Member States, to be available no later than June 2011;

(f) Decides that the meeting will be chaired by the President of the General Assembly who will present to the closing plenary a summary of the discussions prepared by the co-chairs to be transmitted, under his authority, to the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, to be held in the Republic of Korea, in 2011;

11. *Welcomes* the enhanced collaboration and cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and United Nations programmes, funds, agencies and entities working on land degradation issues;

12. *Notes* the outcome of the fifth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility, and invites donors to the Facility to ensure that it is adequately resourced during the next replenishment period in order to allow it to allocate sufficient and adequate resources to its six focal areas, in particular its land degradation focal area;

13. *Welcomes* the amendment to the Global Environment Facility Instrument, whereby the Facility shall be available to serve as a financial mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, pursuant to article 20, paragraph 2 (b), and article 21 of the Convention;

14. *Takes note* of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the assessment of the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat

Desertification[12] as well as the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its ninth session[13] requesting the Bureau of the ninth session to undertake and supervise an evaluation of existing and potential reporting, accountability and institutional arrangements for the Global Mechanism and their legal and financial implications;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa";

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

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[12] See A/64/379.

[13] ICCD/COP(9)/18/Add.1, decision 6/COP.9.